

U.S.S.N. 09/808,584

Remarks

Applicants thank the Examiner for kindly indicating that claims 58-61 are allowable in their current form. Applicants also thank the Examiner for withdrawing all of the rejections previously of record.

Claims 36-56 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claim 58 has been amended. Claim 58 has been amended to correct an inadvertent clerical error and not for reasons related to patentability.

Claims 1-9, 19-24, 29-31, 35 and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Jonkers (U.S. 4,299,164) in view of Jaffa et al. (U.S. 5,501,147).

Jonkers discloses a squeegee for pressing a dyepaste through a sieve (e.g., a stencil) of a printing machine and onto a web or sheet. (Emphasis added.)

Jaffa et al. disclose an apparatus for conveying a printed sheet from one conveyor to another.

Claim 1 is directed to an apparatus for coating an article where the apparatus includes an applicator, a conveyor for sequentially transporting a plurality of articles to the applicator, and a metering bar that includes a fixed arcuate end positioned against the applicator to meter a predetermined amount of coating composition to the applicator for transfer to an article transported to the applicator by the conveyor. The metering bar forms a nip with the applicator and exerts a force against the applicator. The predetermined amount of coating composition is determined, in part, by the force of the metering bar and a hydraulic force present at the nip. Jonkers describes passing a dyepaste through a stencil and onto a sheet or web. Thus, the portion of the dyepaste of Jonkers that is transferred to the sheet of Jonkers is transferred directly to the sheet by the squeegee. The dyepaste of Jonkers is not transferred from an applicator to an article. Rather, to the extent that the dyepaste is transferred to the stencil of Jonkers, it is simultaneously scraped off of the stencil by the action of the squeegee. If a portion of the dyepaste of Jonkers was transferred from the stencil to the sheet, it would ruin the resulting print. Therefore, Jonkers does not teach an apparatus that includes a metering bar that meters a predetermined amount of coating composition to an applicator for transfer to an article. Jonkers thus lacks a required element of the apparatus of claim 1.

U.S.S.N. 09/808,584

Jaffa et al. do not cure the deficiencies of Jonkers. Jaffa et al. do not teach or suggest an apparatus that includes a metering bar that meters a predetermined amount of coating composition to an applicator for transfer to an article. The proposed combination of Jonkers and Jaffa et al. thus lacks a required element of claim 1. Accordingly, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been made. Applicants submit, therefore, that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Jonkers in view of Jaffa et al. has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 2-9, 19-24, 29-31, 35 and 37 are distinguishable under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Jonkers in view of Jaffa et al. for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 1.

Claims 2 and 9 are further distinguishable for at least the following additional reasons. Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and further discloses that the applicator includes a roller having a durometer of no greater than about 55 Shore A, and the fixed arcuate end of the metering bar is positioned against the roller. Claim 9 depends from claim 1 and further specifies that the applicator includes a roller. Jonkers does not teach an applicator that includes a roller. The applicator of Jonkers is the squeegee. The squeegee of Jonkers is not a roller. In addition, the element that the November 18, 2005 Office action indicates is an "applicator roll", i.e., element 3, is actually a curved stencil. A curved stencil is not a roller. In addition, the curved stencil of Jonkers does not apply a coating composition. Therefore, the curved stencil of Jonkers is not an applicator. Thus, Jonkers fails to teach a required element of claims 2 and 9.

It is undisputed that Jaffa et al. do not teach or suggest an applicator --let alone an applicator that includes a roller. Therefore, the proposed combination of Jonkers and Jaffa et al. lacks a required element of claims 2 and 9. Accordingly, a *prima facie* case of obviousness as to claims 2 and 9 has not been made. For at least these additional reasons, the rejection of claims 2 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Jonkers in view of Jaffa et al. has been overcome and Applicants request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 32-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Jonkers and Jaffa et al. and further in view of Kirk Othmer.

U.S.S.N. 09/808,584

Claims 32-34 depend from claim 19 and are distinguishable over the proposed combination of Jonkers and Jaffa et al. for the reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 19.

Kirk Othmer does not cure the deficiencies of Jonkers and Jaffa et al. In particular, Kirk Othmer does not teach or suggest a metering bar that includes a fixed end positioned against an applicator to meter a predetermined amount of coating composition to the applicator for transfer to an article. Accordingly, the proposed combination of Jonkers, Jaffa et al. and Kirk Othmer lacks a required element of the apparatus of claims 32-34. Applicants submit, therefore, that the rejection of claims 32-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Jonkers in view of Jaffa et al. and further in view of Kirk Othmer has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

The claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Applicants respectfully request a teleconference interview should the same further prosecution of the application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required and to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 501,171.

Respectfully submitted,

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Allison Johnson
Reg. No. 36,173

Allison Johnson, P.A.
Lake Calhoun Executive Center
3033 Excelsior Blvd., Suite 467
Minneapolis, MN 55416
Telephone (612) 929-0700
Facsimile (612) 929-0706